



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/743,144	12/23/2003	Ming-Jen Liang	4413-0133P	7472
2292	7590	12/27/2005	EXAMINER	
BIRCH STEWART KOLASCH & BIRCH PO BOX 747 FALLS CHURCH, VA 22040-0747			MOAZZAMI, NASSER G	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			2187	

DATE MAILED: 12/27/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/743,144

Applicant(s)

LIANG ET AL.

Examiner

Nasser G. Moazzami

Art Unit

2187

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 23 December 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-17 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-17 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Objections

1. Claim 6 is objected to because of the following informalities:

Line 6, "15" should be deleted.

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

2. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

3. Claims 1-11, and 13-17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Shiota (US Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0149851).

As per claims 1 and 11, Shiota discloses a write-protected micro memory device **[flash memory card 1 (Fig. 1)]**, comprising: a single chip flash memory controller, having a write-protect parameter **[flash memory controller 3 (Fig. 1)]**; at least one flash memory divided into one or multiple blocks, connecting to said single chip flash memory controller **[flash memory 2 (Fig. 1)]**, wherein said write-protect parameter is

marked to write-protect a block of said flash memory **[flash memory controller 3 has a write protect function using attribute information of the write area registration table (paragraph 0044)]**; and an interface circuit, connecting to said single chip flash memory controller, and a host connected between said memory device and said host **[host interface circuit 5 and host 11 (Fig. 1)]**,; wherein when said host retrieves/stores data or program from/to said flash memory, said single chip flash memory controller can prevent said host to write data into said marked block in the flash memory according to said preset write-protect parameter **[when the flash memory controller 23 is to write to the flash memory 22 in response to a data write access request from the host 11, it refers to write attribute information of the management areas and if the sector to write is write-disabled, it rejects a write to the sector (paragraph 0062)]**.

As per claims 2-3, Shiota discloses that said single chip flash memory controller is a programmable firmware, which is inlaid in or external to a mask ROM or inlaid in or external to a rewritable memory, wherein a program or data recorded once in said mask ROM or in said rewritable memory to enable the user to set said write-protect parameter, and said parameter has a write-protection to said marked block **[embedded in the reference, because of being able to instruct the flash memory controller to modify write attribute information by the host (paragraph 0044)]**.

As per claim 4, Shiota discloses that said rewriteable memory is comprised of EEPROM or Nor Type Flash **[flash memory]**.

As per claims 5, and 13 Shiota discloses that said interface circuit is comprised of an USB interface circuit, PCMCIA or ATA IDE interface **[IDE or the like (paragraph 0042)]**.

As per claim 6, Shiota discloses that said single chip flash memory controller is to convert a control signal of said host into a signal for controlling said flash memory, and to manage and program properly for said flash memory to make said single chip flash memory controller receiving a command from said host (including writing address and data), and send out said writing command to said flash memory then write said address and data transmitted from said host 15 in orderly into said flash memory **[inherent in the art, since in order to access the flash memory, the accesses or commands from the host has to go through a conversion]**.

As per claims 7-8, and 14-15, Shiota discloses that said memory device is comprised of a memory card or a memory stick **[flash memory card]**.

As per claims 9-10, and 16-17, Shiota discloses that said host is comprised of a computer or a card reader **[host device or host system]**.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. Claim 12 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shiota in view of a well-known features.

As per claim 12, Shiota discloses the claimed invention, but fails to specifically disclose that said flash memory is comprised of a 32 MB NOR Type Flash, said 32 MB NOR Type Flash has 2048 blocks, and each block contains 32 pages; a page is a smallest data transmission unit, and said page is consisted of a 512 byte data area and a 16 byte redundant area. However, having a flash memory that is NOR types flash with specific size and having a number of blocks with each having a number pages is well known and it would be as a matter of design choice to fit the designer's needs. Thereby official notice is taken **[for example Aasheim discloses a NOR type flash memory, wherein the number of blocks and pages can vary. Aasheim specifically disclose that the flash memory is being divided into blocks 0 through N and each block further is being divided into K sectors, wherein the flash commonly contain 8, 16, or 32 sectors per block. Sectors and pages are equivalent and interchangeable (column 3, lines 13-25)]**. Accordingly, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art to have a flash memory with the specific specification as being

taught by Aasheim in order to be able to meet the designer's needs.


Conclusion

6. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. See attached PTO-892.

7. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Nasser G. Moazzami whose telephone number is (571) 272-4195. The examiner can normally be reached on 7:00AM-5:30PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Donald Sparks can be reached on (571) 272-4201. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

8. Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).


NASSER MOAZZAMI
PRIMARY EXAMINER
12/21/2005